

The Appendices I-IV have been deleted, and the material contained therein has been added as the tables of the drawings, as indicated below.

IN THE DRAWINGS:

Please enter proposed Figures 18A-18I, and 19-21, which are TABLES I-IV, as indicated on the attached new drawing sheets. This information corresponds to the information in the Appendices I-IV as originally filed, and is being converted to table format in the drawings as permitted by 37 CFR § 1.84. No new matter is added. Applicant will submit formal drawings upon the indication of allowable subject matter

IN THE CLAIMS:

Please replace claims 1, 4, 5, 7, and 67 with the following rewritten amended claims:

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1. (Amended) An apparatus for non-electrophoretic determination of the presence of at least one analyte in at least one flowable sample, said apparatus comprising:
- a housing having a cavity formed therein;
 - at least one filtrate-receiving vessel positioned within the cavity of said housing, the filtrate-receiving vessel having an open end;
 - at least one membrane component positioned over the open end of the at least one filtrate-receiving vessel;
 - at least one sample-receiving well, each sample-receiving well being positioned in association with one of said membrane components such that sample placed within a particular sample receiving well is filtered through the associated membrane component, and a filtrate which emerges from that membrane component will be received within the associated filtrate-receiving vessel;

Sub 33
a lid for sealing each of said filtrate receiving vessels and said cavity of said housing, the lid having at least one sample port bounded by an edge extending from the surface of the lid away from the cavity, the edge is structured to retain the at least one membrane component; and

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a differential pressure source to cause a pressure differential between each of said sample-receiving wells and each of said filtrate-receiving vessels, said pressure differential being operative to drive each sample through the associated membrane component and the resultant filtrate into the associated filtrate-receiving vessel.

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4. (Amended) The apparatus of Claim 2 further comprising:

at least one air-inlet opening formed in said apparatus, the air inlet openings being associated with each one of said sample-receiving wells, such that when a particular sample-receiving well becomes empty air will be drawn through the associated air inlet opening.

5. (Amended) The apparatus of Claim 1 wherein the differential pressure source comprises a pump which is integral of the apparatus.

A35 Sub 39
7. (Amended) The apparatus of Claim 1 wherein at least one of said membrane components have portions formed of a first hard material, and portions of a second elastomeric material, the portions formed of said elastomeric material being at locations which abut against neighboring components of the apparatus to provide substantially air tight sealing therebetween.

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67. (Amended) The apparatus according to Claim 1 wherein at least one of the membrane components are configured so as to nest within one another when stacked, thereby ensuring proper alignment of the membrane components to allow sample to flow through each sample flow channel.

Please add claims 68-78 as follows:

68. (New) An apparatus for non-electrophoretic determination of the presence of at least one analyte in at least one flowable sample, said apparatus comprising:

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a base having a cavity formed therein;

at least one filtrate receiving vessel disposed in the cavity of the base;

a cover sealed over the cavity of the base, the cover comprises at least one sample port disposed over the at least one filtrate receiving vessel to permit filtrate from a sample to flow through the sample port into the filtrate receiving vessel, the at least one sample port surrounded by a rim extending from the cover away from the at least one filtrate receiving vessel; and

at least one membrane module disposed over the rim surrounding the at least one sample port of the cover, the at least one membrane module having a receiving cavity for receiving a sample to be filtered, and a filter for filtering the sample.

69. (New) The apparatus of Claim 68 further comprising a lid disposed on each of the receiving cavities of the at least one membrane module.

70. (New) The apparatus of claim 69 wherein the lid comprises an aperture for air flow.

71. (New) The apparatus of claim 68 further comprising a port within the base to facilitate a decrease in pressure within the cavity of the base.

Sub B11 72. (New) The apparatus of claim 68 further comprising at least one membrane module nested in the at least one membrane module disposed over the rim surrounding the at least one sample port.

73. (New) The apparatus of claim 72 wherein the nested membrane modules are interlockingly engaged with each other.

74. (New) The apparatus of claim 68 wherein the receiving cavity of the at least one membrane module comprises a plurality of concentric rings of a hard material and an elastomeric material.

75. (New) The apparatus of claim 68 wherein the filter of the at least one membrane module is circumscribed by a ring of an elastomeric material, the ring of elastomeric material is circumscribed by a ring of hard material, and the ring of hard material is circumscribed by a second ring of elastomeric material.

Q37 76. (New) The apparatus of claim 75 wherein the ring of hard material slopes toward the filtrate receiving vessel from the outer perimeter of the ring of hard material to the inner perimeter of the ring of hard material.

77. (New) The apparatus of claim 75 further comprising at least one slot disposed in the ring of hard material and at least one connecting member engageable with a slot disposed on the ring of hard material of another membrane module.

78. (New) An apparatus for non-electrophoretic determination of the presence of at least one analyte in at least one flowable sample, said apparatus comprising:

a base having a cavity formed therein;

at least one filtrate receiving vessel disposed in the cavity of the base;

a cover sealed over the cavity of the base, the cover comprises at least one sample port disposed over the at least one filtrate receiving vessel to permit filtrate from a sample to flow through the sample port into the filtrate receiving vessel;

at least one membrane module disposed over the at least one sample port of the cover, the at least one membrane module having a receiving cavity for receiving a sample to be filtered, and a filter for filtering the sample, wherein the receiving cavity of the at least one membrane module comprises a plurality of concentric rings of a hard material and an elastomeric material; and

a second membrane module nested in the at least one membrane module disposed over the at least one sample port.

REMARKS

Claims 1-7, and 67 were pending. By way of this response, claims 1, 4, 5, 7, and 67 have been amended, and claims 68-78 have been added. Accordingly, claims 1-7, and 67-78 are now pending.

Item 2 of the Office Action

The drawings have been objected to for failing to comply with 37 CFR 1.84(p)(4). Regarding the reference characters "24" and "22", Applicant has amended the specification as set forth above to address the alleged ambiguity. The specification now clearly states that reference number "22" indicates the lid, and reference number "24" indicates the air